

Crime Prevention Tips for Walking, Biking and Public Transportation

Here are 18 ways to protect yourself while you are out:

- Try to arrange to have a companion with you when out walking.
- Plan your route. Use well-lit streets.
- Walk on the curbside away from buildings where an assailant could conceal himself.
- Don't stray away from the well-traveled path or take short cuts through alleys.
- Don't have that "one drink too many". Street criminals look for victims whose defenses may be impaired by alcohol.
- If you think you're being followed by someone on foot, change directions or head for a store or a group of people.
- If you are on foot and think you are being followed by someone in a car, change directions.
- If a driver stops to ask for directions, don't get too close to the car and risk being pulled in.
- When shopping, don't carry or flash large sums of cash.
- Women should carry purses close in to their bodies, with a hand on a clasp, if possible. Purses should not be dangled.
- Consider carrying a shoulder bag. It's harder for a purse snatcher to grab.
- When carrying armfuls of packages, women should tuck purses in between the packages and the body.
- Carry your keys in your pocket, so if your purse is taken, you won't lose them.
- Never leave purses on store counters or sitting on the floor in a restroom.
- Be alert for suspicious looking persons when you enter a public restroom.
- Men should carry their wallet in an inside jacket pocket or a front pocket.
- Beware of the person who crowds you in an elevator or group of people. He may be a pickpocket.
- Don't hitchhike. You have no way of knowing who is going to pick you up or what their intentions are.

Tips for the Pedestrian

- Avoid being alone, there's strength in numbers.
- Avoid poorly lit deserted streets and alleys.
- Don't stop to talk with strangers.
- Always have one hand free to defend yourself.
- Walk briskly, confidently and purposefully.
- Walk facing traffic.
- Walk in the middle of the sidewalk.
- Plan your route in advance, and vary your routes whenever possible
- Separate your house keys from your car keys. Women should keep their keys in places other than their purses. If your purse is snatched, you will still have your keys.
- Keep names and phone numbers of relatives or friends on your person, in case of an accident or emergency.
- Trust your intuition. If you feel you are being followed - run. Go to the nearest brightly lit area where there are people. Go to a house that seems to be occupied.
- If confronted or chased, run as fast as you can toward help and yell, "Fire". If all else fails, smash the window out of a house or business with a burglar alarm.
- Don't carry large sums of cash. If you do carry cash, do not display it in public.
- If possible, carry only identification, phone numbers and the credit cards you will need. Keep a list at home of credit cards and other important material you would need to replace in case of loss.
- Avoid using an ATM after dark. When you do use one, stand in front of it to hide your personal identification number.
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

Public Transportation Safety

You should always remain alert when riding public transportation. Here are some tips for remaining safe:

- Plan your trip.
- "Call backs" are a good idea. Advise a family member, friend or co-worker of your travel route and time. Call them when you arrive safely.
- Have your exact fare ready before you leave your home, office or a store. This way you won't have to fumble for your money at the fare box or display extra cash.
- Use a busy and well-lighted bus stop to get on and off a bus. If you must wait, stay near the attendant's stand or in a well-lighted area.
- Find a seat on the aisle if possible. This allows you to observe everything around you, and to avoid getting "boxed in" against the window.
- Sit near the driver or operator, but avoid sitting right next to the door. Thieves may try to snatch jewelry or personal belongings from people near the door and exit quickly.
- Don't doze off on a bus or become too engrossed in a book. It can make you an easy target.
- Keep your purse, shopping bag, backpack, packages or other belongings in your lap, on your arm, or between your feet. Do not leave them on an empty seat.
- Avoid displaying expensive looking watches, rings, necklaces or other jewelry. Don't invite trouble.
- Be wary of noisy passengers arguing or causing a commotion. This could be staged to distract you while others are trying to steal your valuables.
- Observe the behavior of those around you. If you feel uneasy or threatened, change your seat or alert the driver.
- Minimize the chances of losing your property by avoiding crowded buses.

Walking/Running

- Avoid walking/running by yourself at night.
- If someone suspicious is behind you, cross the street.
- After getting off a bus, or out of your car, make sure that you are not being followed.
- Avoid passing too close to shrubs, dark doorways and also avoid taking deserted short cuts.
- If someone in a car approaches and threatens you, scream and run in the opposite direction the car is traveling.
- Ask taxi drivers to wait until you are inside your house before pulling away.
- Be sure that you have your keys in hand to open your door.
- Don't wear jewelry or carry cash.
- Wear reflective material.
- Consider carrying a cellular phone.
- Vary your route.
- Walk/run against traffic so you can observe approaching automobiles.

Bicycle Safety Tips

Did you know that about 75% of all bicycle related deaths result from head injuries? You can prevent most serious head injuries by getting in the helmet-wearing habit.

The helmet should have a label that says it meets "ANSI" or "Snell" or "ASTM" safety standards. The helmet should cover the forehead. Riding a bike of the wrong size make it easier for you to lose control and be injured.

- Both feet should touch the ground when you are sitting on the seat with your hands on the handlebar.
- When straddling the center bar, you should be able to keep both feet flat on the ground with about one-inch between your crotch and the bar.
- If the bike has hand brakes, make sure you can comfortably hold the brakes and apply enough pressure to stop the bike.

Some rules for the road.

- Look in all directions before entering or crossing the street.
- Wear bright colored clothes or helmet or attach a florescent-colored flag on a flexible pole to your bike.
- If you ride on the street ride in the same direction as traffic and stay on the right side of the street near the curb.
- Watch out for parked cars that may pull out into traffic or open their car doors.
- Use hand signals

Bicyclist must obey the same rules of the road as automobile drivers.

Always lock you bike to prevent theft. Never just leave your bike on the front lawn when you go inside or away from the house.

Keep a description of the bicycle, including the serial number.